

Attention: Mr. Theodore M. Nordbeck  
Acting Director  
Office of Libraries and  
Intelligence Acquisitions

Sir:

I have just learned with great concern that the Department of State plans to discontinue the position of Publications Procurement Officer in the American Embassy in Rome. I realize that over-all budgetary considerations must be weighed in arriving at a decision as to the future of the Department's overseas procurement program but I should like to urge that this matter be given further consideration, in the national interest, before a final decision is reached.

The Library of Congress has, on many occasions, expressed to the Department its appreciation for the invaluable assistance rendered by the Foreign Publications Branch and its sense of the importance of the work being done by the Publications Procurement Officers. The collections of the national library would be gravely deficient in the publications of many foreign areas had it not been for the imaginative and efficient efforts of the Department's overseas officers. I know that other Government agencies, civil and military, have similarly benefited and that the national resources have been markedly augmented as a result.

I need not point out that the post in Rome is one of particular importance not only in itself, in terms of prevailing political conditions, but as regards its proximity to the Balkan area. This post, moreover has been especially fortunate in having successively assigned to it as Publications Procurement Officer one of the most able young men ever employed by the Foreign Publications Branch. He has rendered a remarkably effective service in a difficult area and to leave this position

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vacant at this time would, it seems to me, mean a great loss to the Government in general and the termination of arrangements which have, at great effort on the Department's part, been built up over a period of years and which are increasingly beneficial.

I hope that the Department may yet find it possible to maintain a Publications Procurement Officer in Rome and to continue a program which has so amply justified itself.

Sincerely yours,

Verner W. Clapp  
Acting Librarian of Congress

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State  
Washington 25, D. C.